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EDITORIAL NOTES.

It would be difficult to find an article better adapted to introduce an Old Testament periodical to the public, than that which our readers will find on the first page of this number. The prefatory words of the translator are worthy of careful perusal. "Love for truth and evangelical Christianity," and "a heart full of the love of Christ," do not characterize *all* German critics. That Prof. Delitzsch is a critic, all recognize. In his investigations he has adopted the so-called critical methods; but the reverential spirit in which he employs these methods, the great modesty with which he announces the results of his study, compel one to respect, even to love, the man, and admire the scholar, though he may differ from him in some of his conclusions.

THIS article is the first of a series of four which will be furnished in successive numbers of THE HEBREW STUDENT. It may not be amiss to call especial attention to the fact that the matter contained in these articles has never before been published either in German or English, and that it is the very latest statement made by Prof. Delitzsch on these important points. There is no question of greater moment in biblical study, than the Pentateuch-question; and where is the student whose views upon that question are more worthy of consideration than those of Prof. Delitzsch?

"IN its attitude towards 'new theories,' this Journal will be conservative. Judicious discussion of questions of criticism will be encouraged, *but in no case will the editor be responsible for views expressed by contributors.*"

It is desirable, for many reasons, to emphasize this statement, made in the Prospectus. *Once for all* the editor desires to say that this periodical will be conducted in the interest of no "theory," *old or new*. It is a fact which must be recognized, that at the present time, much doubt and uncertainty assail those beliefs which all have been accustomed to hold. Attacks of the most unscrupulous character have been made against the authenticity of certain portions of the Old Testament. New methods of study have been introduced. It is not too much to say that never before was the Old Testament studied as it is now being studied, alike by friend and foe. What will be the outcome? That our old ideas will be modified to a greater or less extent, is probable. But that they are entirely to be given up, and others of the most opposite character substituted for them, the safest authorities deny. In view of these facts, the question arises, and it is a serious one, in what manner is a conservative journal to be conducted? Shall all communications which are not of the most conservative stamp be rejected? It may be the opinion of some that, since the great majority of readers will be incapable of *deciding for themselves* as to the truth or falsity of the views presented, and since the reading of such views must necessarily more or less unsettle the opinion of all who read them, it is not wise or prudent to publish them. There is undoubtedly a truth here, yet is it altogether true? The "new views" in one way or another

will reach the pastors. There is scarcely a well-read minister who has not examined Prof. Wm. Robertson Smith's "*The Old Testament in the Jewish Church.*" They will read, almost without exception, his new book on Prophecy. These questions will certainly be studied. It is merely a matter of time and place. And what better place is there for this study and examination, than the recitation-room of our theological Seminaries, or the conservative religious paper, where the falsity as well as the truth will be noticed, where rash speculation will be dealt with *as such*, where "love for truth and evangelical Christianity" is uppermost "in hearts full of the love of Christ." Why should not these "theories" be met face to face and grappled with?

These and other questions have already come up for decision. That great care and prudence are necessary in the management of this work, is fully appreciated. Will our readers but remember, 1) that whatever appears in our columns is permitted a place there because it is believed that it will subserve the interests of *truth*; 2) that it is the privilege of the reader, as it will also be of the editor, to criticize or refuse assent to any unguarded or unfounded statements of a radical tendency, which a contributor may have seen fit to employ.

ONE has little conception of the *fascination* in Oriental study until he has himself engaged in it. Prof. W. D. Whitney has probably done more than any one else to encourage and stimulate this line of research in America. Earnestly devoted to such study himself, he has impressed all his students with his own spirit of interest and work. It would doubtless surprise us, did we know to how great an extent private study is being carried on in this direction. The great number of elegantly prepared volumes which, within a few years, have been issued by English and American publishers, — books relating to these subjects — is a sufficient indication of the fact noted. There is now within the reach of all who are interested, the necessary literature for the prosecution of such studies. Few men have availed themselves of this literature to read more widely and more carefully than the writer of the article on "Primitive Literatures." The subject an interesting one, the matter new, striking, and abreast of the times, the style finished and elegant, go where you may, you will not find reading more pleasing or more profitable.

WILL not some one write an article for the STUDENT on "A Revival of Hebrew Study." The "Article" is needed, the "Revival" is needed, and the "Study" is needed. Why is it that pastors so universally detest Hebrew? There must be some explanation for the fact, though they may be impossible to assign for it a reasonable excuse. There seem, however, to be indications of a change in this respect. It certainly means something, that four hundred ministers from thirty-five states, and of thirteen denominations have *within a year* felt constrained to take up once more a study so long neglected. True, four hundred is a small percentage of fifty thousand, but if this work is as profitable as they themselves claim, what may not be accomplished in the future?